

Cristina innocente: saint or sinner?

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Well what exactly is the meaning of a true Saint? And what are these characteristics we seem to associate with a sinner? Those saints who have been canonized by the church have sinned, so do we consider them sinners? Or do we only consider those who have committed deadly sins... sinners? Well I honestly think that we are all sinners. The extent or amount of our sins may vary but not one of us can say they we perfect. I strongly feel that you would all agree that Christina is just a regular woman who wanted to care for her family but got caught in the sad aftermath of her large mistake. When we look at the whole character of Christina from beginning to end we will be able to note that she is just a regular person who did commit sins. We can also say that Christina held more saintly characteristics then half the characters in this Book. As most of us here have read Christina does commit adultery and sadly Vittorio does whiteness a part of this occurrence. Does this mistake really make Christina a sinner? I say no we cannot judge her on this mistake alone, and neither can anyone else in the village of Valle de Sole. We have to understand that her husband, whom she loved and was the father of her child, left her. ' What's this?' The man shrugged. ' Something to get you through the winter.' ' He sends me money through the bank,' my mother said. ' He probably needs this money more than I do — I hear he's living in a chicken coop.' ' It's a room attached to Umbertos Di Menna's barn,' Alfredo said. ' He must have told you in his letters. They fixed it up so he has water and electricity. ' He doesn't tell me anything in his letters,' my mother said. ' He only complains. Here, look for your self.' She scanned quickly the letter the man had given her. ' Ah, perfetto, here—" Make sure Vittorio has some warm clothes for the winter. " And I should feel lucky he reminds me, because otherwise the poor boy would run around naked.'

Alfredo fingered the rim of his hat. ' He's going to buy a farm,' he said. ' He wants to bring you over.' ' He knows I won't leave my father,' my mother said, a little quickly, ' Anyway if he thinks I'll go there to live in a barn he's wrong. We have some fine stables right here in Valle del Sole. " (96 Ricci) We can sense Cristina's frustration with her husband in this quote. Not many people were aware of what it was like to be in Christina's position and how lonely she might have felt at times. She had to raise Vittorio without the help of a father figure and the man she loved left her hanging on a promise that said he would be with her again. It was tough for her to always hear from towns people that her husband had plans to bring her over to America and they were never followed through. Although Christina says she would not leave her father, her husband never even made an effort to move her to Canada. Christina surrendered to her feelings in a weak moment of passion, which can be understandable considering how her husband was treating her. He was abusive when he was with her and he left her alone with her 3-year-old child. It was unclear as to why he had to move to Canada and all the letters he sent to Christina were negative and full of complaints instead of love. Here is an example that proves Christina's confusion with her husband found on of the book. "' He doesn't know what he wants!' my mother would say. ' One day he says he's coming back to wring my neck, the next that I can go to the dogs, the next he wants me over there on the next boat. Last week he sent me a letter to give to the embassy in Rome, to get a visa. As if I'm going to travel half the way around the world in my condition. And then to put up with the same idiocy I put up with here!'" (159 Ricci) All this contributed to Christina's state of mind. She wanted a partner who would love her and although we cannot applaud her affair, is it really right to

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condemn her? Since the reasoning of Christina's conflict between her and her husband has been shown it is right to now take a look at the true good that can be found in Christina. She made a choice, and this was to keep the baby she was pregnant with even though she was under immense pressure. She received threats from her father and her husband tried to persuade her to give the child away. ' He thinks we're still in the dark ages,' my mother said the day it arrived, ' when women used to dump their babies at the back door of the convent in the middle of the night and leave them there to die from the cold. Let him carry a baby for nine months and see if he feels that way.' ' You'll do as he tells you.' My grandfather said. ' The orphanage is full of babies just like yours, don't think yours will be special. I'll not have that bastard child living under my roof.' So here it should be taken note of the fact that Christina's husband Mario and her father are pressuring her to give her child away to an orphanage but she is clearly unwilling and shows great responsibility. This type of maturity could not be found in half the women living in the village. She chooses to keep the child because it is hers and she feels a great deal of obligation to the child. She understands that judgment will be put on her but she faces her mistake and decides to give her child the life it deserves. If you ask me this places Christina above her fellow village people because how many of the women there would have got an abortion or gave the baby up right away. This shows the true value Christina can have of a human life despite the values she's grown up with in Valle de Sole. Since Christina's good deeds have been looked upon it is now fair to look at Vittorio's opinion of his own mother. For it Vittorio is the only character in the book that looks beyond his mother's affair and still chooses to love her equally as much before and after his knowledge fed to him by the village. He

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saw his mother as a strong and independent woman. At the beginning of the book we can see the close bond the two held together. The mother takes Vittorio out to Rocca Secca for his birthday and spends a whole day with him without any issues. It may have not ended on a great note but Christina shows an effort to create a good bond with her son. It cannot be said that the other village women try and create the same bond with their children. Most of the mothers are forcing their sons to work in the fields with almost no interest shown to their education and learning. Christina shows interest in Vittorio's school and tries to make sure that he constantly and sufficiently studies his books. When things start to fall apart in Christina's life we can see her start to neglect her son and argue more and more with her father. The town basically ignores Christina for months and is under great stress. It is not easy for her to keep the best relationship with her son at the time when it seems everyone is against her. "You tell your Vincenzo," she said, flinging another bowl, "that if he lays another finger on my son I'll tear out your eyes and feed them to the dogs! To the dogs!" My mother turned to the corner where Vincenzo still stood cowering with his brother and sister. "Do you hear that, Vincenzo? I swear I'll kill her, even if I have to rot in hell for it!" (111 Ricci) So here in Christina's time of despair we see her defending her son because she truly realizes the impact of her mistake her sons life. Soon after Christina decides to move to America and I believe she does this for her son Vittorio. It seems she cannot redeem herself in this town of superstitious and old styled Italians. They refuse to see beyond her sin and punish Vittorio for it too. So it takes a lot for her to move out of her town and leave her father forever but is for the better of her son who deserves a future free of judgment. Fortunately Cristina realizes this. Now moving onto the <https://assignbuster.com/cristina-innocente-saint-or-sinner/>

townspeople. Bits and pieces of their influence on Christina have been covered but now their real impact on Christina's life will be shown. There was a real hypocrisy that was demonstrated by the townsfolk. These people are mainly catholic and churchgoers but these people are quick to judge. They relish on the suffering and hardship of one of their own. Jesus once said when a crowd of people were about to stone to death a prostitute, ' He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.'(Jn 8; 7) Not one person threw a stone because they all recollected a time in their lives were they had sinned. The people of the village would benefit from this passage of the New Testament. They treat Christina as though she is the devil after her crime of adultery is exposed and become too consumed in their ancient superstitions. They allow themselves to believe Christina is cursed because of a small snakebite. These people are somewhat hypocritical because they are churchgoers and I have heard a saying that says the churches and heaven are full of sinners. Which means sinners can go to heaven and those who sin fill the churches wanting to be redeemed. This Hypocrisy can be found in this quote. ' Yet it was the women of the village who had been harshest towards my mother and who watched hawk-eyed from their stoops for the slow progress of her disease, as if they had taken it upon themselves to keep the disease from spreading; and even at mass now, and afterwards as we filed back into the village, the men seemed merely awkward and put out by my mother's presence, passing by us stoop-shouldered, their eyes averted almost guiltily, as if they had been forced into a posture that did not sit well with them, while the women avoided my mother still with a cold-eyed rectitude, hurrying their children around us with their backs straight and their eyes forward. " (Ricci 144-145)In this passage we see how easy it is

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for them to act this way. They have just received the body of Christ and almost right after the mass they start sinning even though they themselves may not realize it. Those of Valle del Sole must learn a valuable lesson that to judge others one must completely understand and register the pain another may feel in the situations they endure. From the arguments put forward it is clear that Cristina is just an average woman who has sinned but has shown many of the characteristics of a saint, as well as suffering as a saint would. Her characteristics prove to be more in line with what a saint would have than a sinner keeping in mind that all saints have been sinners at one time or another in their lives. She also has shown to be true to her son and goodness, which is more admirable than what can be said of the town that accused her and judged her without merit. There is no hypocrisy in the way she behaves and her imperfections shown without fear raises her above anyone in the town. In the end she is just a person like any other person struggling in life trying to look after her family. This makes her very human and it should be kept in memory that all saints were humans. Like a great man once said, " Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future. "

Work Cited -Ricci, Nino. *Lives of the Saints*. Toronto: Comorant Books Inc, 1990. Print. -Good News Bible_. Susan Lightly, ed. Birmingham: Liturgical Publications, 1954.